

Title: Blackrock Analysis

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This book devotes itself to the study of the nature and various applications of the material known as blackrock.

While many have frowned upon the active study of this mysterious substance (including quite a few members of Lord British's court), I believe that the potential power and danger that the substance of blackrock offers to us demands that it be carefully studied. Some have pointed out that all that have studied Blackrock extensively have gone mad or lost their grip on reality to some degree or another. This is a personal subject for me and I shall speak on it later.

### Physical Traits

The mineral Blackrock has several interesting traits. It is a very dark ore that seems to absorb light in greater abundance than it should. It is polished, even after breaking. It cleaves along crude and somewhat random crystalline patterns. It

is fairly rare in occurrence and is typically found around roughly 8 heights below ground in mountainous areas. What is odd about the distribution of Blackrock is that it seems to appear and disappear in areas at random and when it is present, it exists in small, highly concentrated formations. Blackrock can be excessively dense at times - tougher than any known ore - while at others it can be quite malleable. It is not clear what triggers this transition or what affects the density of the ore, but some have speculated that the substance manifests itself as it pleases. Because of the excessive density that blackrock is capable of possessing, one might think that it would be a suitable ore to craft with. Indeed, a breastplate made of blackrock could be an incredible boon for the wearer, perhaps even more so if the wearer is a mage, but consider this: If the density of blackrock is both unpredictable and uncontrollable, how long would that breastplate stay in a usable shape? Most likely, it would become as soft as cloth in the depths of some awful dungeon.

## Occurance

As stated earlier, blackrock occurs and

disappears at random. Sometimes it will stay for less than a day after being discovered while other times it has been known to stay in one place (though not always in the same shape or density) for many years. Blackrock is quite rare and even when discovered is found only in isolated quantities. It should be noted that the necromantic reagent known as blackmoor is a mixture of dirt and blackrock.

Necromancers claim that blackmoor yields power to spells, but I am not one to verify or refute the authenticity of these claims. If they were proven to be true, the chaotic nature and sheer essence of blackrock could quite definitely be used a source of power, though it would probably be unstable and dangerous.

## Magical Properties

As previously mentioned, Blackrock is both unstable and tremendously powerful. It exhibits many chaotic behaviors and has a very powerful magical presence. Despite the apparent magical nature of the substance, it is not affected by magic. That is to say that if a spell is cast at blackrock, it is simply absorbed by the mineral. This may be an indirect argument

for the magical nature of Blackrock.

Consider: If there exists a material that does not respond to magic at all, can't this material be considered magically sensitive since it chooses to abstain from responding in the presence of magic?

This effect is probably achieved by a localized disruption of the magical ether. Such an effect would render a mage totally inept and could theoretically disrupt incoming spells as well.

At any rate, blackrock exhibits characteristics of consciousness. It chooses when, where, and in what shape it appears. It chooses what signals it ignores and what signals it responds to.

The fact that the necromancers claim it as part of a vital reagent, blackmoor, also lends credibility to the magical nature of the material.

Additionally, various madmen and darklords have sought it for dark and evil purposes such as the for use in the spell of armageddon.

### Structural Integrity

As I have stated numerous times before, blackrock is a chaotic material in all aspects of existence. It is not to be trusted or relied upon unless there is

no other choice present. Blackrock is evil and chaotic. It is the tool of madmen and dark lords.

Due to this chaotic and unpredictable nature, Blackrock has been known to spontaneously combust. That is to say that one minute a blackrock vane in the mines of Minoc could be sitting peacefully in a somewhat normal-looking shape and then suddenly the mineshaft bursts into flames! Some have been able to trigger this effect on command through the use constructed wands. However, these individuals seldom lived to tell the tale and I know of no such wand in existance today. it should be noted that these wands were originally constructed to control blackrock's structure, not destroy it. The basic premise behind the wand was that it manipulates and realligns the magical ether and focuses a directed stream at the blackrock formation. The explosive force of blackrock is something unparalleled by conventional explosives and I've only seen a few mages replicate such an inferno. The destructive power of blackrock provides yet another reason why it should be regulated by Lord British.

## Erosion of Minds

Most mages and scholars that have studied blackrock or have had prolonged exposure to it have wound up losing their grip on reality. Some have merely gone insane while others have lusted after the power they once sought to understand and control. The degree to which the erosion occurs is directly related to the quantity, density, and duration of exposure. Fortunately, the effects of blackrock insanity seem to be short-term. If the afflicted person is isolated from blackrock for a prolonged period of time, recovery will occur on a larger timeframe than initial exposure. I can personally attest to these things and urge the reader to give Blackrock the proper respect it deserves.

-Xellos the Sane